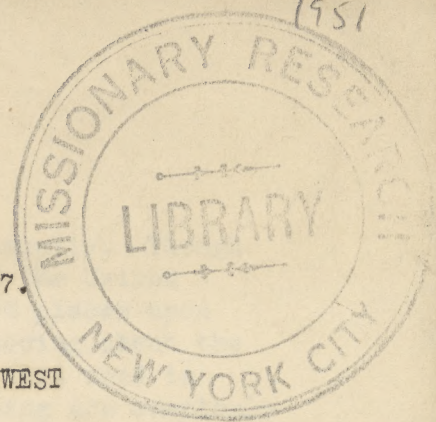


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For release to the afternoon newspapers October 18, 1937.

THE INDIANS AND THE GOVERNMENT IN THE SOUTHWEST

Address by Hon. John Collier, Commissioner of Indian Affairs
before the Meeting of the Southwest District of Kiwanis International
at Clovis, New Mexico, at 3 P. M., October 18, 1937

Nowhere else as in this Southwest country, is the white man's present and future life so involved with the long past, and with the present and future, of the Indian. Indian Affairs are of concern to every thoughtful citizen in the Southwest. Indian life is an important element in the business or economic life of big areas of these states. Indian policy has a bearing upon the tax structure, and upon the support of the public institutions, of many counties. The crafts of Indians, their customs and habitations and festivals, are a controlling influence in persuading the tourist traffic into Arizona and New Mexico. I do not have the figures for Arizona, but I am informed that the number of tourists visiting New Mexico has now gone far beyond the number visiting Colorado, and most of them visit Arizona as well.

In the Southwest, water and soil are the makers of human fate, and in this matter, the Southwest is profoundly dependent on the wise use by the Indians of their immense semi-desert range areas. The planned, integrated use of whole watersheds, by their Indian and non-Indian neighbors together, is one of the dominant necessities of the Southwest, and in this crucial matter it is the Indians, not the white men, who are taking the lead.

The Southwestern Indians present to our view facts which cut sharply across many traditional preconceptions about Indians. Here in the Southwest are ancient Indians, still faithful to their ancient ways, and determined to remain faithful, who yet are moving forward into undertakings essentially modern, and even prophetic of the white man's own future.

I have welcomed this chance to appear before the Kiwanis International Clubs of the Southwest because I think that there are many facts of present Indian Affairs which necessarily must interest the business men of this part of the country. And peculiarly in New Mexico and Arizona, the interest of responsible leaders of the white

community is indispensable if the Indians are to fare happily. Though the Arizona and New Mexico Indians are full citizens of the United States, they are denied the voting franchise. That fact places upon those who do have the franchise a responsibility for knowing about the problems and needs of the disfranchised minority. And this need is the greater because Indian well-being and white well-being are complexly interdependent in these states.

I believe that the only way I can make the facts live, in this address of an hour's duration, is by dealing with concrete examples. And even the pictures that I may be able to draw will have to be sketchy pictures, because whatever Indian tribe one looks at, one is dealing with a long history telescoped into the present, and with a quasi-independent civilization, and no two of the Indian civilizations are identical with the others. The cases which I shall dwell upon are chosen in order to make real my proposition that the Indians are workers, economic producers, capable citizens, and organized bodies of men and women with an already proven capacity for doing noteworthy, practical things needed by the total community. At the same time, these identical tribes are ancient Indians, living an inward life which perpetuates the civilizations -- they were real civilizations -- of pre-Columbian times.

THE TRANSFORMED MESCALERO-APACHES

I commence with the Indian Reservation nearest the place where we are now meeting. Five years ago, a Senate Committee reported upon the condition of the Mescalero Apache Indians, whose habitat is down beyond Roswell. The Committee's report drew a picture of complete gloom -- of hopelessness. Two years later, in 1934, an Indian Bureau supervisor wrote:

"There are 718 Mescalero Apaches, and more than 600 of them are camped around the Agency in Tularosa Canyon where they live in tents, in brush tepees, or in board shacks in conditions of utmost squalor. Many of their hovels are vermin-infested and disease-breeding."

Commonly it was assumed that the Mescaleros were in this condition because Apache Indians would not or could not work, and would not or could not pursue their own advantage in an intelligent, up-to-date spirit.

The Mescaleros appeared, in fact, at that time, as nothing but an unorganized or disorganized crowd of recipients of one or another kind of dole.

The picture today is an extraordinarily changed one. The change came about through no accident, and certainly not through an increase of doles, but through intelligent planning, and under a superintendent with a plentiful fund of common sense. Today, instead of being camped in squalor around the Agency, most of the Mescaleros live in newly developed local communities with contiguous irrigated or dry-farm lands and accessible range lands. Their children attend local day schools. Their old and indigent are living upon subsistence garden plots in decent but modest houses.

The Mescaleros voted to have the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 apply to themselves, and under it they organized and became a chartered corporation. In their constitution, they enacted that never again should tribal assets be distributed in cash handouts, called per capita payments, for hurried, unplanned spending by individual tribesmen. Having organized, the Mescaleros sat down, through their elected Council, and examined their total situation -- their physical assets, their state of health, the kind of housing they were enduring, the need for a more equitable distribution of land assignments, the need for increased individual cattle-holdings. They organized cooperative cattle and sheep associations. To the satisfaction of everybody, they recast the assignments of agricultural lands for individual use. They borrowed, under the Indian Reorganization Act, \$163,000 for the building and rehabilitation of their own homes, and repayment of this loan is assured. A year ago, it was my privilege to live for a week's time with the chairman of the Mescalero Tribal Council. He was a young man but the elders trusted him. There was nothing about his people, their resources, their strengths and weaknesses, that he did not know. There was no phase of the business problem of the tribe and its individual members, about which he had not thought with striking practicality. Afterward, I met with the tribe as a body, and I learned that this young man was typical rather than exceptional. In less than five years, the Mescalero people had gone across from an operation of long-drawn-out, perilous, embittered dying to an operation of realistic and enthusiastic living. Perhaps some of you, going back to your homes from Clovis, may drop in upon the Mescalero Apache Reservation, and if you do, it will be a place you will want to come back to.

THE ONCE BLOODTHIRSTY JICARILLA APACHES

Now I pass to another case, and again it is an Apache Indian case, and I choose it with a particular object in view. There is a widespread belief that the so-called New Deal for Indians is wholly a novel, unprecedented thing, which leaped into action from the brains of Brain Trusters in the year 1933. The case I am going to give you will serve to correct that misunderstanding.

Across forty years, after the United States annexed the Southwest, the Apaches were the terror of everybody else, and the Jicarilla Apaches were as bad as the worst. In the year 1887, the Jicarillas were set down upon the high plateau which straddles the Continental Divide, close to the Colorado line in New Mexico. It was in that same year, 1887, that the General Allotment Act for Indians was passed, requiring the breaking up of Indian tribal lands into individual holdings, and disregarding even the family institution among Indians. Under the General Allotment Act, the Indians were destined to lose 90 million acres of their best land in the forty-five years after 1887. They did lose it. The Jicarillas were allotted like the rest, but I shall explain why they are not losing their land.

Twenty years ago, the Jicarilla Apaches were an embittered, hopeless and, literally, a dying tribe. Their numbers had fallen from 795 in 1909 to 585 in 1919. They were leasing their entire reservation -- 750,000 acres -- to commercial stockmen for the magnificent price of \$10,000 a year, and they were starving upon this lease money plus the rations handed out by the government and similar dribblets of doles.

I say that their hopeless hour was twenty years ago. In that year, there was put at the head of the Jicarilla Apaches a man who now is the Senior Field Representative of my own office, Chester Faris.

Mr. Faris saw that there were two necessities, interdependent. One was to provide a health service that would check the shocking death rate of the Jicarillas. The other necessity was to get the Jicarillas to go to work. The work could only be one sort -- livestock work. The devastating mortality rate was partly a reflex of a despairing and unoccupied intellectual and emotional life.

Small issues of sheep were made to each family on a loan basis. Additional issues followed, when ability and willingness to work were demonstrated. I pass rapidly across the intervening years and I tell you the result. From an embittered and dying people in 1920, with an income that did not exceed twenty dollars per capita, the Jicarillas last year, after eighteen years of up-building, showed an earned tribal income which had been jumped from \$10,000 to \$150,000, and an earned individual income which had been jumped from twenty to two hundred dollars. In place of dying, they were multiplying. Their increase was faster than that of the general population.

Already, in telling about the Mescalero Apaches, I have mentioned the Indian Reorganization Act, advocated by President Roosevelt and signed by him in 1934. Everbody said -- that is, everybody except Chester Faris said: "These Jicarillas will not understand the Reorganization Act during the lifetime of the present generation. They distrust one another and they are afraid of self-government. The only time they

have ever taken collective responsibility was when they went on the warpath, and their ancient forms simply can not be readjusted into an essentially modern program like that of the Indian Reorganization Act. Forget about the Jicarillas."

The gloomy prediction about the Jicarillas rested on their then supposed recalcitrancy and benightedness. But in addition, many people said, "There is an Indian trader who has been for forty years a sort of feudal overlord of the Jicarillas. His name is Emmet Wirt and he will never let the Jicarillas organize."

Others said: "There are big stockmen who still continue to lease a part of the Jicarilla Reservation. Organizing under the Reorganization Act means ultimately, and rather soon, the taking over by the Indian themselves of their own range for their own stock. These white stockmen will dominate the Jicarillas, and they certainly will prevent them from organizing."

I was very curious to know the real situation and the real attitude of the Jicarillas. I went up there, and was met by the far-famed, allegedly man-eating old dog, the inseparable companion of Emmet Wirt. This dog kept guard at the front gate of this reputedly ruthless dictator, Emmet Wirt. The dog proved to be a welcoming host, and Emmet Wirt proved to be one of the most interesting and attractive human beings that it has been my privilege to meet in all the years. Wirt, with his old dog thumping approval in a dog's way, disputed everything I had been told about the Jicarilla Apache situation. He insisted that the Jicarillas were capable of any reasonable human adjustment, if only they were treated like grown men. He offered to help find out what they really would do.

As for the interested white stockmen, the lessees of the Jicarilla range, I discovered that not one of them did more than mildly to suggest that they be not closed out of their leases without time enough to find other range.

Then I met with the Jicarilla Indians. Most of them do not read English or talk it, but the questions that were asked me were questions which probed to the heart of Indian Affairs, and especially of the policies lying back of the Indian Reorganization Act. Among other things, they wanted to re-compound their individual allotments back into the tribal estate, because they knew that allotted land soon becomes lost land. This re-compounding is now feasible, under the Indian Reorganization Act.

Well, to be brief, six months ago the Jicarillas adopted their self-governing constitution under the Reorganization Act, by a vote of 240 for and two against. Two months ago, they adopted their

charter of business self-government by a vote of everybody for and nobody against. Then their delegates came to Washington, and negotiated a loan, under the Indian Reorganization Act, for the \$80,000 needed to establish the tribe as its own trader, retail and wholesale, cattle, commodities, clothing, knickknacks, candy, cigarettes -- everything but alcohol.

And the terrible white overlord, Emmet Wirt, who for forty years has served as the banker, broker, storekeeper and counsellor of the Jicarillas, has gone along with the developments, step by step, without one assertion of personal advantage. No, he is not making money out of the changed program; he can not, and he does not want to.

To you, business men and men who know the difficulties of getting concerted community action on anything, this Jicarilla record will be an impressive one. I summarize it by repeating, that one of the most warlike, least anglicized, and most archaic tribes of pureblood Indians has gone from death to life, from pauperism to increasing plenty, from total dependency on the paternalistic Indian Office to a high degree of self-rule, and from a total absence of business enterprise to an advanced form of cooperative business activity, through guidance supplied by a series of Administrations, Republican and Democratic, across seventeen years.

THE ARIZONA PIMAS -- IN 1924 AND NOW

Now let us cross a state line and glance at an organized tribe in Arizona. The Pima Tribe is a good example. It is down near Phoenix. In 1924 its death rate showed up five times that of the white population. The life expectancy of the Pima Indian appeared to be about seventeen years.

The Pimas, who in the Civil War had been able to furnish the United States Army with surplus grain, and whose land three hundred years ago had seemed like a garden of roses when viewed by the earliest Spanish explorers had starved for forty years prior to 1924. They, too, are a fullblood Indian tribe. Yes, this was a white man's wrong-doing to the Pimas. But I am not now dwelling upon the wrong done but upon the way it is being set right.

The Pimas' need for water is the same as that of their white neighbors. To supply both of them, a Federal investment of \$11,994,497 was necessary. Congress appropriated the money. Today, 90,000 irrigable -- 83,500 irrigated -- acres are under the constructed works of the Coolidge Dam. The San Carlos Apache Indians furnished the dam-site and the flowage area. Thirty-five thousand of the acres are now Pima-irrigated. The Pimas, when the Indian Reorganization Act was passed, rushed to clothe

themselves with its protections and business advantages. I have time only to mention one item. If any of you have the opportunity, go and look at the 12,000-acre corporate farm of the Pima Tribe. You will find this immense irrigated tract being successfully operated by Pima Indians. You will learn that the earnings on its annual gross yield of \$198,000 are used to pay the water charges on the individually allotted tracts which also the Pimas are successfully operating. The 12,000-acre corporate farm, at an early date we hope, will be assigned to individual Pimas, and its management will pass from what now resembles government ownership to Indian cooperative management. Not an acre of Pima land has been leased outside the tribe.

Has there been an irreconcilable antagonism of interest between the Pima Tribe and its white neighbors? If so, events since 1924 do not reveal it. These five thousand Indians, their white neighbors of the Salt River Valley, and the Congressional delegation of Arizona, have worked as a unit since that black period before 1924 when the Pimas faced extinction through gradual starvation. The upbuilding of the Pimas has been the upbuilding of the region. The upbuilding of the region has been the upbuilding of the Pimas. Nor has the Federal government been "milked" by the region, or by the whites or the Indians. Coolidge Dam and its distributive system are wholly solvent business enterprises, paying their operation costs, and amortizing all the capital costs incidental to white use. As for the Pimas, they need not pay construction costs so long as they keep their own lands; and that is right, because while I have merely touched upon the forty years' starvation of the Pimas through an outrageous neglect and even wrongdoing on the part of the Federal government, those forty years are of record, and the government owes to the Pimas a restitution of those waters taken from the tribe, a ward of the government, in the period beginning fifty years ago. I mean, the Pimas in my opinion should not pay for the construction which has restored their water to them. They can pay and they are paying for the maintenance of their water system.

THE OLDEST INDIANS WHO ARE DOING THE NEWEST THINGS

I have said that here in the Southwest we have the ancient Indian meeting challenges of the present, and even building a peculiarly modern kind of future. Perhaps there is no more dramatic illustration of this statement than one finds at Acoma Pueblo, the "Sky City," built long before the white man came, and Laguna Pueblo, to the east of Acoma. I do not only refer to the fact that these Pueblos, like the Hopis of Arizona and all of the other New Mexico Pueblos except one, have voted to live under the Indian Reorganization Act. Nor do I refer primarily to the fact that Acoma and Laguna Indians, quite faithful to their ancestral traditions, are holding responsible jobs on the Santa Fe Railway clear cut to San Francisco. Rather, I will tell you about these Pueblos as forerunners in the planned use of natural resources.

Three years ago, Laguna Pueblo was running 55,000 sheep units on a badly damaged range which could properly support only some 12,000 sheep units. Acoma was running 33,000 sheep units on a damaged range whose carrying capacity was 8,000.

It is a commonplace fact of white livestock enterprise, that groups of cattlemen or sheepmen using a common range never voluntarily cut down their livestock to carrying capacity; never voluntarily impose severe rules of conservation upon themselves.

Whether on the public domain or in the national forests, authority has to be used, and used continuously, in a slowly succeeding effort to establish conservative range practices.

Two and a half years ago, the Laguna and Acoma Indians were given all the facts about their land. They were told: "The government is not going to use compulsion on you. What action you may take is going to be your own action, carried out in your own self-governing way." Many weeks of tribal discussions went forward at these Pueblos, and out of the discussions there emerged a plan of drastic stock reduction, which amounts to a cutting down of sheep units at the rate of more than 10,000 units a year through succeeding years.

It is one thing to make a plan, another thing to carry it out when it hurts. Laguna and Acoma went right ahead, and fulfilled their reduction undertaking for the first year to the last dot. They fulfilled it for the second year to the last dot. And now, for the third year, they are again proceeding to reduce.

The mere reduction in animal units, of course, is only one factor in the Pueblos' land-use undertaking. The self-imposed task of these Indians includes the equitable distribution of range rights, the proper rotation of range, and the introduction of many technics for making the water supply do more work and for rehabilitating the damaged soil and its vegetative cover.

The main thought I want to convey is this. Acoma Pueblo today continues to live an ancient Indian life. Its language, its fundamental customs, its fundamental attitudes toward living and doing and sharing, are rooted back in the thousands of years before Coronado. The civil government of Acoma took on its present form, under Spanish influence, three hundred years ago. Acoma is not merely ancient by accident -- it is not merely unconsciously archaic. Acoma is consciously determined to keep on being its pre-Columbian self. Acoma thinks that its ancient life is a good life.

And it is this same Acoma which, with a certain amount of wise, un-hurrying, advice and guidance by its Indian superintendent and other white friends, has moved out into the position of an exemplar and forerunner of the policies, the social arrangements and the technologies of the planned use of water, vegetation and soil. That means pioneering in the most urgent field of problems of rural America.

It is a picturesque fact that the Acomas, through some old Indian wisdom or divination, for years and years insisted that water was to be struck at a certain place near the ancient city on the high rock, although the government's engineers were sure that water could not be struck at that place. Finally the Acomas had their way, and last July, at 300 feet, the drillers struck water amounting to an 1,100 gallons per minute flow.

Definitely, Indian administration in these seventeen Pueblos (Acoma and Laguna are two of the seventeen) is a conserving of the ancestral powers, the ancestral institutions and motives of these most ancient of Indians, through the sort of unobtrusive but deeply informed help and advice that enables the Old World, pre-Columbian forces to operate in a new and in a future-world setting. It is not a case of "the old must die that the new may live." Rather, the old must live in order that the new may be healthfully, economically, and even brilliantly achieved.

THE NAVAJOS' CRISIS, IN BRIEF.

I say less about the Navajo problem and program, because that is being discussed all the time by ever so many people. The Navajo Reservation is the largest and the most complete soil conservation demonstration area in the United States. The problem in that region is a desperate one. Under the best conditions, it is not certain that this heavily eroded, semi-desert reservation of 25,000 square miles could support its 50,000 Indians in any but a meager fashion. But year after year, the resources of the area have been washing and blowing away. Ten years ago, erosion had passed the critical and had entered the catastrophic stage on millions of acres of the Navajo range. The animal load was twice the carrying capacity of the damaged land. And the Navajos were increasing in population by more than five hundred a year.

Into that situation, beginning in 1933, there has entered (as also in the Pueblo country) a set-up which illustrates the new policy of Indian Affairs very significantly. In July, 1933, an interdepartmental committee from the Departments of the Interior and of Agriculture studied the land and economic situation of the Navajos, and out of this committee's report there grew an interdepartmental work which merges Indian Service with Soil Conservation Service into an Unified Navajo Service.

It was known to start with, that a struggle which must last for years was being embarked on. Primarily it was a struggle between man and the Nature which man had injured. But heavy sacrifices for comparatively remote gains would be necessary on the part of the Indians -- Indians who did not read or speak English, and who were not organized for long-range thinking and action as the Pueblos were. Could the Navajo range be saved, while supporting, without interruption, not merely its animal overload but its human overload?

Were I to try to tell you the whole story, it would consume all of my hour, and I can only point to a few highlights. The animals on the Navajo range have been cut from about 1,300,000 sheep units to about 950,000. Improved sheep, bred from the native stock, are being supplied from the Fort Wingate Sheep Laboratory, a joint enterprise between the Indian Service and the Bureau of Animal Industry of the Department of Agriculture. The facts necessary for comprehensive land-use planning in each of eighteen land-use districts have been assembled, the districts have been created, and range rules have been adopted by the Secretary of the Interior upon the advice of the Grazing Committee of the Navajo Tribal Council. The tribe itself has reorganized its self-governing institution, through a constitutional assembly that has been working upon a proposed new constitution across the last four or five months. The Navajo Tribe is not functioning under the Indian Reorganization Act, having rejected the Act by a narrow margin, but none the less it wants self-determination, and the Indian-drafted constitution as at this stage perfected (the drafting is not finished yet) is, I believe, the most radically drawn up of all the Indian tribal constitutions, from the point of view of responsible self-government. The tribe has been confused by controversies arising out of the unfortunate blocking of the New Mexico Navajo Boundary Bill. There have been threats of sit-down strikes, of marches of protest. There have been denunciations of government officials by a strident minority of Navajos. Yet the last sheep-dipping, after a preliminary show of resistance, "went across" exactly one hundred percent. The horse round-ups, which are voluntary, have been successful, although when the buyers came, the Navajo owners of horses proved reluctant to sell. The day schools, forty-eight in number, are going ahead, and their school population is more than 2,000 children and a greater number of adults. Doubtful minds feared, and some hostile voices predicted, that the attempt to get the Navajo range in shape to resist flood and wind would turn out to be the Waterloo of the New Deal for Indians. Not so has the event proved. The Navajos' problem today is further advanced toward solution than I, at least, dreamed it could be, knowing as I did the terrible difficulties, when I pondered over the situation three and four years ago. When I discuss the question of tax losses through ownership of land by Indians, I shall mention the Navajos again.

DO INDIANS LIKE THE INDIAN REORGANIZATION ACT?

Now, going on from these particular cases, and speaking here to representative men from all over the Southwest, I think it proper to give the Indians' and the Interior Department's view of certain controverted matters. One of these is that fundamental policy, espoused by President Roosevelt, which was made law in the Indian Reorganization Act of June 18, 1934. Statements are made from time to time that the Indians do not like the Reorganization Act and want to be set free from it. The subject particularly would be of interest to Kiwanis members from the Southwestern country, because every Indian tribe except two, in the Southwest, has voted to place itself under the Act.

The Reorganization Act is a very simple measure in its most important features. It prohibits the alienation to whites of land still owned by Indians. It provides for the addition, through purchase, of new lands for subsistence-farming and grazing, where the tribes are seriously land-poor. It sets up a credit institution, through which Indians may finance their stock-raising, truck-farming, craft, timber and other enterprises. It provides for the consolidating of Indian-owned lands which had become split to tiny fragments by subdivision through inheritance. It allows Indian tribes to organize for political self-government of a moderate kind, and for the more business-like handling of tribal assets, and for cooperative business ventures. The Act gives to Indians a preference over non-Indians for Indian Service jobs, where vacancies occur, if they can demonstrate an equal fitness. Finally, the Act provides loan-funds for the education of Indians in colleges and trade and professional schools. Simple as are these provisions, I admit that they are revolutionary when viewed alongside the Indian policies of times gone by.

The Indian Reorganization Act, as enacted in 1934, was in its entirety a permissive, not mandatory, law. Tribes could adopt it as their own law, or they could reject it, and a majority vote was conclusive. Individuals within tribes could use or neglect to use the protections and privileges of the Act. Tribes and bands numbering 189, with members totaling 129,780, brought themselves under the Act by majority votes. Oklahoma and, to a large extent, Alaska, had been excluded from the Act by the Act's language as passed in 1934. But last year, Congress, acting on widespread Indian demands, extended the Act by blanket legislation to all Oklahoma tribes except the Osages and to all the natives of Alaska.

Even before being passed by Congress, the then-pending Reorganization Bill was submitted to all Indian tribes for debate and endorsement or condemnation, and the original draft was modified in a number of fundamental particulars to meet the wishes or hesitations of the Indians, registered at congresses held in every part of the Indian country.

What, actually, has been the record under the Act? This has been the record:

Indians numbering 252,211 are now under the Act. They are grouped into tribes or bands numbering 206. They represent 68.8 percent of the total of Indians in the United States and Alaska.

Sixty-nine tribes, with 89,143 members, have adopted constitutions and by-laws under the Reorganization Act. Forty-one tribes with 40,247 members have ratified their charters of incorporation.

No tribe or group which has adopted the Act or which (in Oklahoma and Alaska) has been brought within the terms of the Act by blanket legislation, has asked by vote or by majority petition to be relieved of the terms of the Act.

So much unanimity could not have been prophesied three years ago. How different are these solid facts from the announcements made in anti-Reorganization-Act propaganda from time to time!

WHAT ABOUT TAX LOSSES FROM INDIAN LANDS?

The next controverted matter about which I wish to speak is the subject of loss of taxes, due to the circumstance that title to Indian Reservation lands rests in the Federal government in trust for the Indians.

First of all, the non-taxed Indian lands have to be broken down into two classes of lands. There are Indian lands which never were taxed, and which everybody has always understood could not be taxed. They never yielded a land tax to states or counties; and in consideration of that fact, the Federal government supplied, without exception, every public service carried out upon the lands. Such are all the Southwestern Indian reservations, with the exception which I shall immediately refer to. For brevity I omit mention of a few insignificant land purchases made by the Pueblo Indians.

What about this other, much smaller, class of Indian lands -- lands which once were taxed or are now being taxed, which have passed or may pass to the Indians through federal purchase?

There are just two groups of land in Arizona and New Mexico which fall into this second class.

One of these groups consists of Spanish land grants in New Mexico, totaling about 700,000 acres, bought as submarginal land, but bought expressly for the use of the Pueblo Indians. They are part of the widely extended submarginal land purchases scattered over many parts of the United States -- and in tax yield and acreage value, a very small part indeed.

What about these lands? When the government bought them, they were in a state of more or less extreme wreckage, due to over-grazing -- over-grazing principally by large commercial operators.

Promptly upon acquiring these lands, the government moved in with protective and rehabilitative measures. The expenditure on water development and soil engineering was paid out chiefly in wages to white men. It is the Soil Conservation Service and the Civilian Conservation Corps which have done the work on these lands.

The Federal expenditure upon these lands in a single year is equaling their tax yield of twenty years and much longer. The lands have been saved from passing into desert lands. The Federal expenditure has flowed to the local communities.

And then what about the beneficiaries of these land purchases? That question leads us to a problem central to the life of the upper Rio Grande Watershed in New Mexico. Living near these Pueblo purchase grants, there are two populations dependent upon the range for their sheer subsistence. They are the Pueblo Indians and the Spanish-Americans.

Neither population has a sufficient amount of range land for healthy subsistence. Both groups have been compelled by sheer necessity to overload their pitifully insufficient range-holdings with two and three and more times the proper carrying capacity of livestock, thus progressively destroying their own portion of the Watershed and contributing their load of costly silt to the Rio Grande and the Elephant Butte Dam.

With the consent of the Pueblo Indians, for whom these 700,000 acres were bought two and three years ago, one-half, approximately, of the total acreage has been devoted to the Spanish-American neighbors of the Indians. Half has been devoted to the Indians. Previously, neither the Spanish-Americans nor the Indians had the advantages of this land. As I have stated, commercial stockmen used the land and wrecked it.

The other group of lands which past or proposed Federal purchase for Indians will remove from the tax rolls is 565,000 acres already bought by the Navajo tribe -- mostly in Arizona, and with the consent and good-will of the counties, the congressional delegation of Arizona and generally of the people of Arizona; and approximately four hundred thousand acres, in New Mexico, which would be purchased by the Navajo tribe under the terms of the pending but long-delayed New Mexico Navajo Boundary Bill. The loss of taxes to counties has been urged as the main argument against the New Mexico Navajo Boundary Bill.

Intense controversy has raged over this Navajo Boundary Bill. I give you the facts in a nutshell.

In a checkerboarded area, reaching eastward from the present Navajo boundary in New Mexico, there live 9,500 Navajo Indians and 200 white persons. The whole area once belonged to the Navajos, through an executive order of President Theodore Roosevelt. It was taken away from them through an executive order of President Taft. But by homesteading, public domain allotment and purchase, the Navajos have re-acquired more than

half of all the land in the contested area. They want to acquire the remainder. As I have stated, they densely inhabit the area already; it is their ancestral home. White commercial stockmen use most of the grazing yield of the area. The Boundary Bill would donate to the Navajos the residual public lands of the area, and would make possible the addition of state-owned and privately-owned lands by purchase or by exchange. Then the Navajos would occupy a consolidated body of land which the government could proceed to help them save from erosion and develop into a permanent grazing range.

It really is just the subject of tax losses which I am talking about now. How trivial and wrong-side-up that subject is, in the present instance, I will quickly tell you. Its importance is nothing but the fact that it is the talking-point of those who are opposing and blocking the Navajo consolidation proposal - the Navajo Boundary Bill.

What, then, are the facts as to tax losses? Last year a Senate Committee received the facts and published them and after a year they stand uncontroverted. If all the white-owned land in this contested area is taken into account, and all the white-owned livestock, it turns out that the tax yield - for land and livestock - in 1934 was just \$3,416. That is all - \$3,416. The average tax yield through a series of years has been about \$4,000.

Now look at the other side. If the checkerboarded lands can be consolidated, and Federal custody over their orderly use can be made possible, the Federal government will spend not \$3,416 a year (the amount of lost taxes) but more than \$400,000 a year, in water development, roads, soil engineering and other operations and services. The Federal expenditure each year will equal the lost tax yield of more than a hundred years.

Actually, if present conditions continue, there soon will be no tax yield at all. Through continuing uncontrolled overgrazing and through neglect of soil engineering, the land will pass to utter desert, and dead desert land pays no taxes to anybody. But down in the valleys of the San Juan and the Rio Grande Rivers, the white population will pay increasingly heavy taxes in order to control the flash floods and the huge and growing silt loads from the ruined watershed.

I do not suggest that Indians should forever remain locally tax-free. Actually, they are not locally tax-free now -- they pay the sales tax. But I make an assertion which I believe that nobody will dispute, and it is this: if New Mexico or Arizona, or any part of either of these states, were given a choice of continuing to receive the benefits of the Federal spending on Indians and Indian lands, as over against the right to tax these lands, with the corresponding obligation to maintain out of local taxes the roads, schools, law enforcement work and all the other services, the choice would be promptly and decisively made, and made every time one way. That choice would be to leave unchanged the tax-exempt status of Indian lands.

INDIAN SERVICE MONEY SPENDING.

The third controversial matter upon which I wish to dwell briefly is the subject of money-spending for Indians and by the Indian Service. I believe that there exists a very general impression that Federal Indian costs have been boosted away up in recent years. That impression is a correct one, if no distinction be made between capital investment and current cost. Out of the emergency funds, a generous capital investment has been made in Indian school buildings, hospital buildings and, above all, water development, from large irrigation systems to flood-water spreading works, wells and charcos. Such capital investment had been neglected to an extreme extent through all previous years. Road building on Indian reservations was all but non-existent before 1933. The Indian death and disease rates, even into the late twenties, were running nearly twice as high as the white. More than 7,000 Navajo Indian children were shut out from all school opportunity because there were no schools. The Indian grazing range of the whole country had deteriorated in an amount exceeding 51 percent of its original soil content, and in the Navajo and Pueblo areas the damage had reached far beyond 51 percent. Into four years we have crowded a capital investment which normally might have been distributed across ten years or even longer. Of course, our expenditure total showed an increase.

The new appropriations creating for Indian tribes a revolving loan fund; the new appropriations creating educational loan funds for Indian youth; the new appropriation for buying land for landless Indians; and the road construction appropriations, increased from \$270,000 in 1933 to more than \$3,000,000 in current years: all are properly viewed as capital investment. And until the Indian death rate is brought down to the level of the general population, I think that hospital maintenance and public health work for Indians is a capital investment.

When these several items, whose necessity is universally acknowledged, are deducted, what actually do we find?

We find that with a large capital investment on the credit side of the ledger, and with the increase of hospital maintenance and of field medical service left out of the picture, there exists, on the debit side, no increase of expenditure at all. There has been since 1933 a vast increase of work output with practically no increase of employed man-power to do the work. Actually, when the factors of capital investment and of broadened health service are deducted, Indian Service today is being run at a less total cost than was Indian Service in the fiscal year 1933. If the whole field service of the Indian Bureau in the United States, exclusive of Alaska, be viewed, omitting the doctors and nurses, the regularly employed total is found to have increased just 3 percent between the fiscal year 1933 and the fiscal year 1938. The total pay roll of these employees has not increased at all.

When the number and the aggregate salaries of Indian Office employees at Washington, in the field, and in Alaska, is compared to the total appropriations, it turns out that the salary or overhead cost of the Indian Service in 1933 was 50.5 percent of the total Indian Service appropriation, while in 1936 it was 38.5 percent. The ratio of cost of employed personnel to total appropriations had fallen 24 percent between these years. This diminishing ratio of overhead to expenditure has not resulted in a loss of efficiency, but it is reflected in the year in and year out overtime being put in by thousands of the employed personnel. I might mention such an item as the more than three hundred percent increase of incoming and outgoing mail at the Washington Office. That three hundred percent increase of Washington Office business has been somehow managed, although the Washington Office personnel has been increased only 9.2 percent from 1933 to 1938.

INDIANS AND INDIAN SERVICE OUTSIDE THE SOUTHWEST.

Talking to you business men and community leaders of the Southwest, I should remind you that the examples which I have used in explaining the Indian situation are Southwestern examples because this is your own part of the country. Were I to go beyond the Southwest for examples, the experience of this area would be duplicated in the Plains country, the Mountain States, the Lake States, on the Northwest Coast, and to some extent in Oklahoma. Nowhere are Indians in the "limelight" and in the forum of debate the way they are in the Southwest, but Indian events are moving just as fast in other regions. Perhaps the Indian Reorganization program has moved faster in some other regions; it has been more needed in the other regions. The upbuilding of Indian livestock industry has been just as striking in some other areas. Indians as workers, in Minnesota and the Dakotas, in Montana, along the Pacific Coast, have made records fully as impressive as the records of the Southwestern tribes, and more surprising, because in many Southwestern tribes, self-support through effort has been the unbroken rule since the days of pre-history, whereas in many of the allotted areas Indians had grown accustomed to a meager life supported by lease moneys. I should add, to correct a misunderstanding which I have encountered from time to time, that Indian Service expenditures, measured on a per capita basis or on a land-area basis, are considerably higher in many regions outside the Southwest than they are in the Southwest. The reason primarily is the enormous cost of the real estate and personal guardianship operations entailed by the allotment system -- operations which consume, in case after case, more than half of the total appropriation for a given Indian Agency, and which bring very little in the way of productive return to the Indians. That comparatively unproductive spending of money is unnecessary in the Southwest. I would say, approximately, that fully three-fourths of the energy output and money-spending of the Indian Service are carried on not in the Southwest but in other regions, and that in the other regions, in spite of the

devastation of Indian life and the depletion of Indian assets by land allotment, still the Indians are showing a life-tenacity, a group ambition, and a responsiveness to new opportunity, just as encouraging as can be found in the Southwestern states.

INDIANS AS WORKERS.

My rambling address must come to a close. I want to urge you to view the Indians as workers. They are producing and consuming groups whose output of individual work has increased decisively in late years. One item of fact must serve to illustrate my statement. In the three years gone by, construction work of the most difficult types has been carried out with Public Works moneys on Indian land. Dwellings, lighting and heating and sewer systems, school buildings, hospitals and office buildings have been constructed. Taking these projects as a whole, 93.6 percent of the total employed labor was Indian. There were cases where the Indian labor was one hundred percent and included all of the skilled classifications. In Indian Emergency Conservation Work, 60 percent of the supervisory and facilitating personnel and 100 percent of the rank and file workers are Indians, and this branch of the Civilian Conservation Corps has been a record-breaker for production at minimum cost to the government. But the main rôle of the Indian as a worker is his farming and his livestock business. He is the oldest irrigation farmer on the continent, and eminently he is the most successful dry farmer in the arid areas. His livestock industry bulks large in the Southwest.

INDIANS AS PEOPLE WITH AN ART OF LIFE.

There is another side to Indian life, which in the Southwest is well known. That is the cultural or esthetic side. And while too much stress ought not to be placed on the mere economic significance of the Indians' spiritual life, it is a fact that Indian culture supplies one of the major tourist attractions in Arizona and New Mexico. But the white man's concern with the spirit of the Indian must go beyond money considerations. There are precious things here, wrought out in the ten-thousand-year life of the Red Race in our Hemisphere before any white man came. Ancient as these things are, they are still young, and they want a future. There are elements of the good life, the disciplined, generous, courageous life, which already have entered into the romantic literature of the world, and which appeal deeply to the spirit of white America. At the very least, these physically frail but spiritually profound Indian civilizations have a value, an importance, not less than the value and importance of such physical wonders as the Carlsbad Caverns, the Grand Canyon, and the Redwoods of the Pacific Coast. We do not want to see the Indianhood die out from the Indians. The policy of the Government now is that the Indianhood in Indians should live on. And such, I believe, is the point of view of Americans as a whole.

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destruction of Indian life and the depletion of Indian assets by land
allotment, still the Indians are showing a life-sustaining, a group unity
that, and a responsiveness to new opportunity, that are outstanding as
can be found in the Northwest states.

INDIAN AS WORKER

My speaking address must come to a close. I want to urge you to
view the Indian as worker. They are working and creating things
whose output of individual work has increased steadily in the years.
One item of fact must serve to illustrate the statement. In the years
years gone by construction work of the past difficult years has been
carried out with Indian labor under the most difficult conditions, light
pay and housing and even worse. Indian labor, Indian labor, Indian
office buildings have been constructed. Indian labor projects in a
whole, 50-60 percent of the work required today was Indian. There was
cases where the Indian labor was one hundred percent and finished all
of the skilled construction. In Indian country, Indian labor, Indian
50 percent of the engineering and building work, and the present
of the work and the workers are Indian, and the present of the Indian
Construction Corps has been a hundred percent for projects of Indian
cost to the government. But the role of the Indian as a worker is
the primary and the primary workers. In the Indian construction
force on the continent, and especially in the most successful
force in the world today. The Indian laborer is the best in the
continent.

INDIAN AS WORKER WITH AN OWNERSHIP

There is another side to Indian life, which is the Indian as well.
known. That is the side of the Indian as owner. And while we must stress
right not to be placed on the same number of ownership of the Indian.
ownership side, it is a fact that Indian workers are one of the major
workers in the Indian as owner and the Indian. And the Indian as owner
with the rights of the Indian as owner, as owner, as owner, as owner.
and private things have, brought out in the Indian as owner, as owner, as owner.
has been in the Indian as owner, as owner, as owner, as owner.
things are, they are still young, and they are still young. They are still
made of the most life, the highest, greatest, beautiful life, which
already have entered into the economic life of the world, and which
appeal deeply to the spirit of the Indian. At the very least, there
physically that the Indian as owner, as owner, as owner, as owner.
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